

# Supporting Local Government Conservation Efforts for Species and Ecosystems at Risk

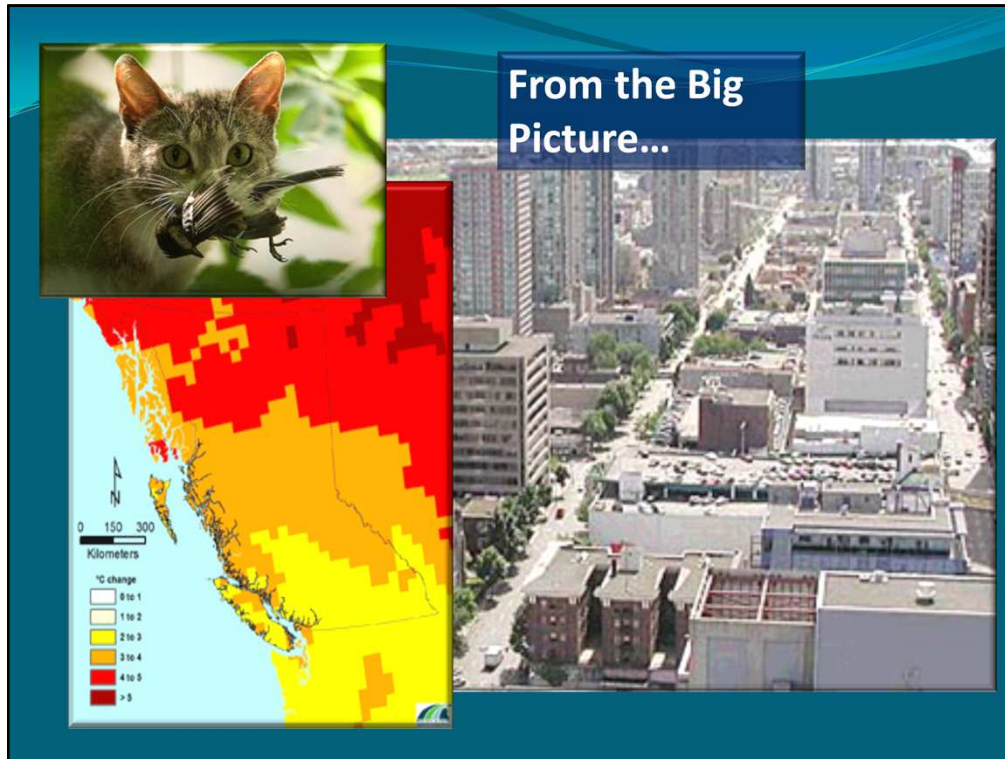


**SOUTH COAST CONSERVATION PROGRAM**  
Protecting and Restoring at Risk Species and Ecological Communities on BC's South Coast

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# Objectives

- **Species and Ecosystems at Risk Backgrounder**
  - Species and Ecosystems at Risk ('SEAR') on the South Coast
  - Legislative context for SEAR protection
  
- **Local Governments Protecting SEAR**
  - Why Local governments?
  - Benefits of protecting SEAR
  - Other local governments on the South Coast
  
- **Working with the SCCP**
  - SCCP LG initiative
  - Services
  - Benefits



Globally and nationally, climate change, habitat loss and invasive species remain the biggest threats to biodiversity and the benefits it provides. Most species at risk often have higher sensitivities to these stressors or occur in low numbers to begin with making them even more vulnerable.



From a regional perspective the South Coast of BC is a biodiversity hotspot, home to some very rare and nationally/ internationally significant species. In our region, land use practices and the demands of a growing population are coming into conflict with the need and responsibility to protect species and habitat. These are often seen as competing interests and local governments struggle to find a balance.

While there is a legislative requirement to protect species at risk through the Provincial and Federal legislation (BC Wildlife Act, Species at Risk Act (SARA)), there are many other benefits besides compliance, to SEAR protection.



## Benefits of Protecting Species and Ecosystems at Risk

- Protecting Critical Habitat protects 'Green Infrastructure' - important to community health and well-being
- Resilient ecosystems = resilient vibrant economies
- High quality recreational experiences
- Continued flow of ecosystem services (clean air, water, food security)

Healthy habitat equals health and well-being for your community

Biodiversity is an indicator of human health and healthy ecosystems contribute to an increase both mental and physical health.

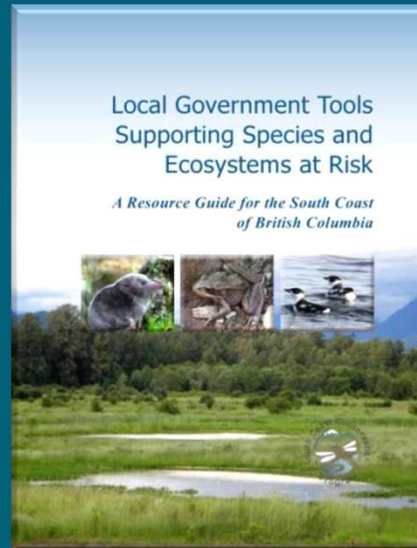
Ecological wealth supports resilient economies (at all scales). For example biodiversity increases opportunities and income from Tourism especially ecotourism. Another example is that you can expect increased property values associated with the maintenance of and proximity to the natural environment. Protecting SEAR also Provides and Maintains a high quality recreational experience. Hunting, fishing, canoeing camping, hiking are all activities that we in the lower mainland enjoy and that depend on intact natural systems for their value.

Something we often take for granted are the Ecosystem Services provided by our natural landscape : flood management, crop pollination, nutrient cycling, regulating and cleaning soils and water purification are all examples of services provided by our environment that we don't pay for. Protecting SEAR and biodiversity ensures the continued flow of these services.

## SCCP's "SEAR & Local Government Initiative

1. Providing LG's with individualized guidance and training
2. Facilitating the sharing of conservation-based knowledge and expertise across jurisdictions.

[http://sccp.ca/programs/conservation\\_planning](http://sccp.ca/programs/conservation_planning)



In our work with local governments what we have heard from many staff and elected officials is that there is neither the capacity, the resources or the expertise to address these issues.

Through initial funding in 2013-14 from the Real Estate Foundation and Ducks Unlimited Canada sought to address these challenges by bringing together local governments to share issues, experiences and resources around SEAR and land use planning. Outcomes included a comprehensive guidance document providing a roadmap for local governments to support SEAR conservation and protection through land use decision making as well as other online resources. See [http://www.sccp.ca/programs/conservation\\_planning](http://www.sccp.ca/programs/conservation_planning)

## Cost Sharing Model

### Stewardship Practices sessions (designed for operational staff and management)

Service	Content	Typical Length	Cost <sup>1</sup>
Half day workshop	Local Governments and the Species at Risk Act (SARA), species-specific stewardship and management Practices	3 hours	\$565
Full Day workshop	Above components with review of critical habitat attributes, restoration approaches and field visit	6 hours plus lunch and breaks <sup>2</sup>	\$960

### Integrating Species and Ecosystems at Risk into Policy and Planning

Service	Description	Estimated time needed	Cost
Overview Assessment	Overview of local government planning and policy framework to identify opportunities for improvement. Includes 1-2 hr meeting to review findings with staff.	~3 working days	\$365.00/day
OCP, NCP, Development Permit review	Detailed review of documents with suggested revisions and modifications. Includes discussion of findings with staff and follow up.	~5 day – 8 working days	\$365.00/day
Presentation of findings to Senior Management or Council	Presentation to advisory committees or council as needed. Includes preparation and delivery of presentation and follow up.	.5 - 1 working days	\$185.00-\$365.00/day

We continue to assist local governments with individualized guidance on policy development and integrated training. The SCCP does this through the application of a social enterprise model. This provides cost effective services enabling local governments to address gaps in conservation policy and action and reduce land use conflicts while supporting compliance with federal recovery plan requirements. Examples to date include designing development permit and OCP language and land use policy and bylaw review for the Resort Municipality of Whistler, District of Squamish and District of West Vancouver. Further discussions are underway with the City of Port Moody and Coquitlam on a joint training session for operational staff.

**Benefits:**

- Connect to learning outcomes of other local governments working on species and habitat protection issues.
- Build proactive foundation for legislative compliance
- Return on investment from the health of your community's natural capital



The image shows the South Coast Conservation Program logo, which includes a circular emblem with a bird and the text 'South Coast Conservation Program'. To the right of the logo, the text reads 'SOUTH COAST CONSERVATION PROGRAM' and 'CONSERVING AND RESTORING AT RISK SPECIES AND ECOSYSTEMS ON THE BC SOUTH COAST'. Below the logo is a collage of six nature photographs: a turtle, a bird, a nest, a bird in flight, a bird on a branch, and a large landscape view of a river valley.

Local Governments are uniquely positioned as they have jurisdiction over many of the activities and decisions that directly affect SEAR; development and land use, amenity planning, pesticide regulations, tree bylaws etc.

The SCCP wants to explore what conservation initiatives are already underway in your community, how we can support you in filling the gaps, and how we can make SEAR protection work in your community. We ask that you discuss this initiative and its application with your staff. We will follow up to discuss your community's specific needs and issues and how we can help address them.

We know that this is an effective and sustainable approach to ensuring long-term conservation goals and responsibilities around SEAR can be met. The SCCP's objective is to address the challenges and work with local governments to lead the way in solutions.

We look forward to working with you and your staff!



Questions?



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